

Patent

CLOTHES SECURING SYSTEM

RELATED APPLICATION

This application claims the benefit of United States provisional application Serial No. 60/409,056 5 filed 9 September 2003.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Neatly kept clothing is a cornerstone of fashion. Even when a person is dressed fashionably, a visible bra strap, visible undergarment, or an untucked 10 shirt may be unsightly, which may interfere with a person's appearance and also may frustrate that person. Consequently, there is a need for device to hold clothing in place.

Previous designs have addressed this problem. 15 For instance, U.S. Patent No. 5,914,166 issued to Le discusses an adhesive strip that may hold a bra strap in place within a shirt. However, the device is difficult for alignment on the bra strap, especially if a user has a sore neck or has difficulty turning her head. 20 Likewise, the adhesive material may easily contact the skin if not properly aligned, which may be uncomfortable or irritating to the wearer. Other similar strips have been contemplated to hold bra straps in place, but have not efficiently contemplated adjustability needs of a 25 person. Thus an efficient, non-permanent system is needed to comfortably and easily hold clothing in place.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates to a cost-effective, non-permanent system and method for securing one piece of fabric to a second piece of fabric in a useful, cost-effective manner. The invention comprises a strip of flexible material with a side having at least a portion covered by adhesive material and a portion that is non-adhesive. Such an arrangement allows the two pieces of fabric to be secured to each other while not necessarily adhering the two pieces of fabric to one another. The system is especially convenient for positioning a bra strap underneath a shirt or other piece of clothing. The secured bra strap is hidden from sight and is also prevented from sliding down the wearer's shoulder.

However, the system allows for the bra strap to slide in relation to the shirt in a channel formed by the securing system and the shirt.

Additionally, a tabular area may be integrally formed with the strip of flexible material. The tabular area is non-adhesive and will assist the user in positioning and removing the strip of material.

The invention may be used for such situations as securing a bra strap to a shirt, securing a shirt within a pair of pants, or secure two pieces of cloth that need to be sewed together. The use of the tab allows for a design wherein both sides of the strip of material are adhesive.

The present invention provides a comfortable, easy to apply securing system. For instance, if a person has trouble turning her neck when applying the system, application is still possible without visually noting the placement of the system. Prior art needs visual confirmation that an adhesive material is aligned precisely on both the outer garment and the undergarment.

However, the present invention does not adhere the bra or

other undergarment directly to a shirt, but rather cradles or channels the bra within the securing system and the shirt. Thus, the system allows for more tolerance when positioning the system and also prevents
5 the adhesive material from contacting the user's shoulder unnecessarily.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is top view of a first embodiment of the present invention.

10 Figure 2 is an enlarged side view of the embodiment shown in Figure 1.

Figure 2A is an exploded view shown in Figure 2.

15 Figure 3 is a sectional perspective view of the invention as used on a shirt and a bra.

Figure 4 shows a sectional view of a person adjusting the present invention.

Figure 5 is a top view of a second embodiment of the present invention.

20 Figure 6 is an enlarged side view of the embodiment shown in Figure 5.

Figure 7 shows a sectional view of the present invention as used on a shirt and an underwear bottom.

25 Figure 8 is an enlarged side view of another embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 9 shows a perspective view of the embodiment of Figure 8 securing together two pieces of cloth.

30 Figure 10 shows a perspective view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 10A shows an exploded side view of the embodiment shown in Figure 10.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

35 Although the disclosure hereof is detailed and exact to enable those skilled in the art to practice the

invention, the physical embodiments herein disclosed merely exemplify the invention which may be embodied in other specific structure. While the preferred embodiment has been described, the details may be changed without 5 departing from the invention, which is defined by the claims.

Referring to Figure 1, a fabric securing system 10 having a predetermined perimeter P is shown. The system consists of a first section 12, a second 10 section 14, and a third section 16. The second section 14 is integrally formed between the first section 12 and the third section 16. The perimeter P of the system 10 is shown as having a bowtie shape, with the first section 12 and the third section 16 tapering outwardly from the 15 second section 14. However, as will become further evident, the perimeter P may be of any configuration or shape. Further, the fact that this embodiment is shown with integral sections does not exclude alternative embodiments wherein the sections are either coupled or 20 connected.

The system 10 of Figure 1 is shown from an enlarged side view in Figure 2. A first side 18 is comprised of the first section 12, the second section 14, and the third section 16. The first section 12 and the 25 third section 16 comprise an adhesive material. The second section 14 is non-adhesive and may consist of a pad or a cushion-type material. Likewise, the second section 14 may simply be an area that is a non-coated section without an adhesive material. As viewed in 30 Figure 2, a second side 20 is shown above the first side 18. The second side 20 is non-adhesive, which allows for the system 20 to be placed on a person's skin without adhering to the skin. Below the first side 18 lies a removable backing 22. While not necessary for the 35 present invention, the removable backing 22 allows the

system 10 to retain its adhesive properties until the system 10 is applied to fabric.

Figure 2A shows an exploded side view of the embodiment in Figure 2. The first side 18 can be clearly seen as comprising the first section 12, the second section 14, and the third section 16. Because the second section 14 does not include any adhesive material, a non-coated, or a void area, represents the second section 14. The removable backing 22 is shown comprising two sections 22a and 22b which meet near the center of the second section 14. Because the second section 14 is non-adhesive, the removable backing is easily removed from the system 10. However, it should be noted that the system 10 may work also if the backing 22 comprises one section or more than two sections. Furthermore, the backing 22 may be designed so that the sections 22a and 22b cover only adhesive sections 12 and 16, and the backing 22 does not cover the non-adhesive section 14.

Figure 3 shows one possibility of the system 10 being applied to a person's clothing. The system 10 is placed on top of a shoulder 24 with the adhesive side 18 facing away from the shoulder 24. The removable backing 22 should be removed from the system 10. The first section 12 is adhered to a shirt, dress, or other garment 26. Once adhered, a bra strap or other undergarment 28 is aligned with the non-adhesive second section 14 or placed atop the second section 14. The wearer then adheres the third section 16 to the shirt 26, thereby securing the shirt 26 and the bra strap 28 together. A unique feature of the present invention is that the shirt 26 and the bra strap 28 are secured to each other, but not adhered to each other. This allows the shirt 26 and the bra strap 28 to move in a predetermined relationship to one another. The shirt 26 and the second section 14 form a channel that holds the

bra strap 28 in place. The channel allows the bra strap 28 to slidingly rest between the shirt 26 and the system 10. The channel, though preferred to be non-adhesive, may be designed with some adhesive qualities, if desired.

5 Thus, the bra strap 26 is hidden from view without unnecessarily constricting the wearer's movements. The device is also non-permanent and offers an ease of use, flexibility, and disposability not provided by a permanent sewn in cloth lingerie strap.

10 As shown in Figure 4, the system 10 may be adjusted once applied. The system 10 is pulled away from the shirt 26 at either the first section 12 or the third section 16. The user can readjust the bra strap 26 relative to the shirt 28 and the system 10 as needed, 15 quickly and efficiently. Depending on the strength of the adhesive, the system 10 may be readjusted a varying number of times. The user then readheres the section 12 or 16 that was removed. If necessary, the entire system 10 may be removed from the shirt 26 and readjusted. To 20 make adjustment effective for a variety of clothing options, the perimeter P may be of any configuration. For instance, if the shirt 26 had narrower shoulder areas, such as on a tank top, the first section 12 and the third section 16 may be designed as relatively 25 narrower sections.

Figure 5 shows a second embodiment of the present invention. A fabric securing system 10 is shown in Figure 1. The second embodiment 30 is generally comprised of a strip of flexible material 32 with a 30 tabular area 34. The tabular area or tab 34 is integrally formed with the strip of flexible material 32, and may be formed as an extension of the strip of flexible material 32, or the tab 34 may be a separate piece of material connected to the strip of flexible 35 material 32. Likewise, the tab 34 is shown located along

an exterior edge of the strip of material 32. However, the tab 34 may be connected anywhere to the strip of material 32 and still allow the user to adjust the second embodiment 30 when applied to fabric or a person's
5 clothing.

Figure 6 is an enlarged side view of the second embodiment 30 shown in Figure 5. The strip of material 32 has a first side 36 and a second side 38. Both the first side 36 and the second side 38 contain at
10 least a portion that is covered with an adhesive material. A pair of removable backings 40 may be used to protect the adhesive sections of 36 and 38 until applied to clothing or fabric. As shown, the tab 34 is an extension of the strip of material 32 and is not covered
15 by an adhesive material. The removable backings 40 are shown as comprising single pieces of material. However, as previously described and shown in Figures 2 and 2A, the removable backings may be formed of more than one piece of material.

20 Figure 7 shows a fragmentary view of the second embodiment 30 (shown in phantom) being applied to two pieces of fabric. A shirt bottom 42 is shown lying over an undergarment 44. Many times it is difficult for a wearer to keep the shirt bottom 42 tucked inside of a
25 pair of pants or skirt (not shown). The present invention allows the wearer to keep the shirt bottom 42 tucked in by adhering the second embodiment 30 to both the shirt bottom 42 and the undergarment. The exposed tab 34 allows the wearer to adjust, reapply, or
30 reposition the system 30 if necessary. For example, if a person was to use a restroom and needed to disengage the fastened clothing, the system 30 may be reapplied after attending to the person's needs. Additionally, as many or as few of the systems 30 may be employed in different
35 positions to ensure that the shirt bottom 32 is neatly

tucked away.

Figure 8 shows a side view of another embodiment 50 of the present invention. The embodiment 50 is similar to the embodiment 30 of Figure 6, except 5 the second side 38 is non-adhesive. The first side 36 still has an adhesive portion, and the tab 34 extends past the adhesive portion. Such an arrangement may be beneficial in situations as shown in Figure 9. Two pieces of fabric 52 and 54 are placed over one another to 10 hold them together. For instance, if the pieces of fabric 52 and 54 are to be sewed together, the system 50 allows a person to use fewer pins than what would have been previously used, or possibly no pins at all. This provides for a safer sewing environment and also makes it 15 easier to adjust the fabric before sewing begins. Furthermore, this embodiment could potentially be used instead of the embodiment 30 shown in Figure 7 for adhering the shirt bottom 42 to the undergarment 44, with the adhesive side 36 overlapping both the outside of the 20 shirt bottom 42 and the outside of the undergarment 44.

Figure 10 shows a different arrangement of the embodiment 30 of the system. A second tab 34 is integrally formed with the strip of flexible material 32. Using the two tabs 34 may make it easier to grab and 25 reposition the system 30 relative to two pieces of fabric. Additionally, the system 30 has a rectangular perimeter as opposed to the previous bowtie shape. As previously noted, the present invention may work with any perimeter arrangement. The embodiment of Figure 10 is 30 advantageous when used around the abdominal section, where the system 30 would run parallel to a waistline. The two tabs 34 assist the user in easily adjusting the system 30.

The arrangement in Figure 10 is shown from an 35 exploded side view in Figure 10A. The first side 36 and

the second side 38 both have portions covered with an adhesive material. The removable backing 40 is shown as coinciding with the adhesive portions of the first side 36 and the second side 38. However, the backing 40 may 5 extend past the adhesive portions, if preferred, or divided into separate sections as previously noted.

As suggested by the above examples, the present invention may be utilized in many different situations. The flexibility of the system allows a user 10 to secure and adhere different fabrics and clothes. For instance, while previous systems may have been designed to adhere a bra strap to a piece of clothing, no non-permanent system attempts to secure the strap in place without adhering the strap to the clothing. This system 15 gives the user much more flexibility compared to a sewn in strap and comfort and ease of use compared to other non-sewn in products.

The system may be designed in any colors or colorless, and any suitable shapes depending on the users 20 tastes or needs. Any suitable adhesive material may be used, provided that the adhesive material will stick to clothing. The adhesive material may be of any degree of adhesion. Preferably, the adhesion is of such a nature that it will be used during a single day or event. This 25 allows sufficient adhesion so that the user may readjust the system, but will allow the systems to be economically manufactured and inexpensive for the user. The systems may be discarded after use.

The foregoing is considered as illustrative 30 only of the principles of the invention. Furthermore, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described. While the preferred 35 embodiment has been described, the details may be changed

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without departing from the invention, which is defined by the claims.